

Application No.: 10/042,104
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REMARKS

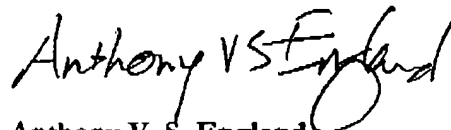
In a first Office action, dated December 14, 2004, claims 1-3, and 7 were objected to because of informalities. Claims 1, 10, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rice (6816961) in view of Sawamura (65534874). Claims 2, 11, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rice and Sawamura and further in view of Menczes (6563379). Claims 4-9 and 13-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Menczes, Rice and Sawamura and further in view of Trimberger (6263430). The Office action indicated that claims 3, 12, and 21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, in Reply A filed on February 18, 2005, claims 2, 12, and 21 were rewritten in independent form. Claims 4 and 13 were amended to change dependency. Claims 4-9 and 13-18, therefore, were then allowable because they depend on respectively allowable independent claims. MPEP 2143.03 ("If an independent claim is nonobvious under 35 U.S.C. 103, then any claim depending therefrom is nonobvious," citing *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988)). Claims 1, 2, 10, 11, 19, and 20 were canceled. Claims 3 and 7 were amended to correct informalities noted by Examiner.

In a second Office action, dated March 31, 2005, claims 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 21 were objected to because of informalities. Accordingly, these claims are amended herein to correct the informalities.

REQUESTED ACTION

Applicant hereby requests that Examiner grant allowance and prompt passage of the application to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,



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